



## Fact Sheet

# The Four Pillars of Mérida

The programs supporting the historic Mérida Initiative are designed to counter the drug-fueled violence that has threatened citizens on both sides of the border. The Strategic Framework for implementing the myriad of Mérida Initiative activities and programs is referred to as the Four Pillars, each of which pulls together Mérida programs under strategic objectives. Taken together, these four objectives will strengthen both of our societies in the fight against organized crime and violence and will help drive the transformation of our bilateral security relationship.



### **PILLAR ONE – Disrupt Capacity of Organized Crime to Operate**

Diminish the power of Mexican organized criminal groups by systematically capturing and incarcerating their leaders and by reducing drug trade revenues by interdicting drugs, stopping money laundering, and diminishing production. Through equipment, technology, aviation, and training, the Mérida Initiative will support better investigations, more captures and arrests, successful prosecutions, and shipment interdiction.

### **PILLAR TWO – Institutionalize Capacity to Sustain Rule of Law**

Enhance the capacity of Mexican public security, border and judicial institutions to sustain the rule of law. Mérida Initiative programs will strengthen the capabilities of key institutions to improve internal controls, further professionalize the military and police, reform corrections institutions, and implement justice sector reform.

### **PILLAR THREE – Create a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Border Structure**

Facilitate legitimate commerce and movement of people while curtailing the illicit flow of drugs, people, arms, and cash. The Mérida Initiative will provide the foundation for better infrastructure and technology to strengthen and modernize border security at northern and southern land crossings, ports, and airports. Professionalization programs will transfer new skills to the agencies managing the border and additional non-intrusive technologies will assist in the detection of criminal activities.

### **PILLAR FOUR – Build Strong and Resilient Communities**

Strengthen communities by creating a culture of lawfulness and undercutting the lure and power of drug trafficking organizations. By implementing job creation programs, engaging youth in their communities, expanding social safety nets, and building community confidence in public institutions, Mérida Initiative assistance will test new initiatives to strengthen Mexican communities against organized crime.